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Desire, Power, and Self-Disintegration: A Psychoanalytic Comparison of Shakespeare's Macbeth and Mary Shelley's Frankenstein

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Abstract

This paper compares two classics of English literature separated by two hundred years: *Macbeth* (1623) by William Shakespeare and *Frankenstein* (1818) by Mary Shelley. The characters differ greatly in era and purpose: one political, the other scientific. Both follow a remarkably similar trajectory of self-devastation through desire. This study has taken insights from the Freudian concepts of id, ego, and superego, as well as Lacanian paradigms of lack, symbolic order, and objet petit a. It suggests that in both texts, the unchecked desire progressively weakens rational self-control. Macbeth's ambition for leadership and Victor Frankenstein's desire to create life are both interpreted as psychological voids the characters can never satisfy. This leads them to increasing guilt, loneliness, and ethical decay. The analysis also treats Lady Macbeth and the Creature as externalized versions of the protagonists' suppressed desires and fears. Moreover, it situates both works within a broader theoretical context of the tragic hero, the Other, and object-relations theory. The paper also examines the rhetorical devices the protagonists use to justify or mask their desires, as well as the feminine and masculine aspects of ambition and creation that permeate both stories. The paper also reflects on the relevance of these two texts today, as they still speak to issues of scientific responsibility and political authoritarianism; however, it has also highlighted the contemporary relevance of AI and digital platforms, and the responsible use of them. Ultimately, the study shows that although Macbeth's and Victor's desires differ, both characters' trajectories lead to a similar psychological and social breakdown: lonely, self-disintegrated individuals who portray the universal psychological force of desire and its absence. The study uses qualitative comparative close-reading methodological techniques.

Keywords: Desire, Self-Disintegration, Contemporary Relevance, Macbeth, Frankenstein

Introduction

Desire and its effects on the human being are among the most persistent themes in Western literature. It is a lens through which we can explore human passion, moral duty, and the terrible consequences of unchecked desire. This paper compares two classic works from different literary eras: *Macbeth*, written in the Renaissance by William Shakespeare, and *Frankenstein*, written in the Romantic era by Mary Shelley. The protagonists of these works share strikingly similar psychological journeys: they begin with respectable origins, but desire that transcends ethics and nature gradually undermines them, ultimately leading to self-destruction. Different fictional eras shape how readers understand a society's socio-cultural norms and contemporary needs (Hameed & Nkanga, 2025).

Macbeth starts as a loyal servant to King Duncan but is eventually swayed by prophecy and persuasion to kill him and take his place. He quickly turns into a bundle of bloodshed and mental illness. Victor Frankenstein, on the other hand, is a young scientist obsessed with the secrets of life, the creation of a living being, and abandoning that being. This act sparks a wave of violence that engulfs all his loved ones. Desire is not only a motivating factor but also a psychological force in both stories, tied to isolation, guilt, and self-destruction.

This paper draws on Freudian models of the id, ego, and superego (Freud, 1961) to analyze *Macbeth's* and Victor Frankenstein's inner conflicts. It also cites Lacanian concepts of lack and the symbolic order to interpret their tragic experiences, which stem from unfulfilled desires and moral failures (Lacan, 1977; Farooqi & Qayyum, 2024).

Research Objectives

1. To compare the forms of desire motivating *Macbeth* and Victor Frankenstein.
2. To examine their psychological and moral consequences through Freud and Lacan.
3. To analyze creators, creations, isolation, guilt, and self-disintegration comparatively.
4. To assess the contemporary ethical

relevance of these literary patterns.

Research Questions

1. How do internal and external catalysts shape *Macbeth's* and Victor Frankenstein's destructive desires?
2. How do Freudian and Lacanian concepts explain their psychological disintegration?
3. How do relationships with others and their respective "creations" contribute to their downfall?
4. What contemporary ethical implications emerge from the comparison?

Literature Review

In *Macbeth*, the failure of *Macbeth* and Lady *Macbeth* has been a major topic of academic debate. Scholars have applied Freud's structural model to explain how *Macbeth's* id (murderous desire) prevails over his ego and superego, causing his moral breakdown. Joseph (2025) and Wang (2024) have analyzed Lady *Macbeth's* shift from ruthlessness to guilt-driven madness through repression, which Freud described as the inevitable result of the return of the repressed. Genc (2023) uses the Jungian term "shadow" to describe *Macbeth's* struggle between his civilized self and his violent urges, arguing that his fall manifests the shadow, or the unconscious mind. Moreover, Andrade & Correia (2024) explored Hamlet and *Macbeth* from the perspectives of the Freudian concept of the Oedipal complex and Lacanian Object a. They have restricted the study to the comparative analysis of Shakespeare's plays.

The themes of Victor's narcissism and the Creature's identity formation have also been the subject of psychoanalytic study in the case of Frankenstein. LaMothe (2023) reads Victor as a sign of pathological grief and narcissism; his urge to create life is a reflection of unfulfilled Oedipal conflicts and a basic failure to deal with loss. Moreover, Oulam (2024) studies The Creature, often cast as the expendable Other, as expressing unexpressed guilt and social isolation, symbolizing what Victor tries to deny in himself. Lacanian interpretations have focused on the Creature's desire for recognition, which the symbolic order of human society denies him, and

on his life outside the symbolic, where violence emerges ([Lacan, 1977](#)).

Research Gap

Although extensive psychoanalytic studies have examined each text separately, comparative scholarship remains scarce. Existing comparative studies usually note superficial similarities in hubris, but they pay too little attention to the differences in desire between a political man who seeks power and a scientific man who creates, or to the similarity of self-destruction in both. This paper fills this gap by offering a sustained comparative analysis grounded in psychoanalytic theory, focusing on how desire and power break down the coherent self in both protagonists.

Methodology

The study uses a qualitative, interpretive research methodology. The study uses close readings of *Macbeth* and *Frankenstein*, supported by psychoanalytic concepts drawn primarily from Freud and Lacan. This approach suits the research problem because it allows the researchers to compare both texts through comparative trajectories of desire and power that lead to self-disintegration. To do so, the authors discuss and analyze scenes, dialogue, and characterization to understand their shared patterns of decline.

Psychoanalytical Perspectives

Psychoanalytic criticism examines literary works to examine the unconscious motives of characters and writers. It assumes that forces we do not fully understand drive human behavior, such as desires, fears, repressed memories, and internal conflicts ([Freud, 1961](#)). The psychoanalytic instruments best suited to this research draw on the theories of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan.

Freud argues that the human psyche has three interrelated structures:

1. **Id:** The primitive and instinctive part of the mind. It is based on pleasure, trying to meet needs such as hunger, sexuality, and aggression without taking into account the consequences. It is absurd, thoughtless, and totally unplanned.

2. **Superego:** The superego is the moral remit. It incorporates society's rules, parents' instruction, and moral values. It is obsessive, arbitrating our actions and often bringing fault and shame when we fall short of its high standards.
3. **Ego:** This is the rational and conscious part of the self. It operates on the reality principle, compromising between the demanding id, the didactic superego, and the external world. The ego balances these forces; if this balance is lost permanently, [disaster occurs \(1961\)](#).

In both *Macbeth* and *Victor Frankenstein*, the id gradually overwhelms the superego, leading to increasingly destructive behavior. Lacan's notions of lack and the symbolic order can further clarify their drives and failures. [Lacan \(1977\)](#) believed that human desire is a basic lack, usually experienced in childhood, when the subject is separated from the mother. Both *Macbeth* and *Victor* try to fill this constitutive lack: *Macbeth* by seizing absolute power, and *Victor* by creating. Both remain unsatisfied, and this never-satisfied hollowness grows into ferocity and gloom, and finally into the disbanding of the self ([Lacan, 1977; Kristeva, 1982](#)).

Lacan, Objet Petit a, and Other

The focusing term in desire is *Objet petit a*, which is "perceived as a missing piece, and shows that the Other is not clearly distinguished from self". Furthermore, "its main task is to keep itself circulating". Kayani and [Hameed \(2021\)](#) argue that its pursuit aims at meaning through *Objet a*, which [Sheik \(2017\)](#) describes as "the enjoyment of the other" (p. 9). The *Objet petit a* is not a mere object to pursue; it points to a lack of self. "It was not necessarily ever missing. It is just a perception" ([Sheikh, 2017, p. 9](#)).

The Other is also a key theme in this analysis. The Other is what lies outside the self, or outside society, and is excluded or rejected. The Creature in *Frankenstein* is the ultimate Other, and his rejection stems directly from Victor's narcissistic desire. Likewise, in *Macbeth*, Banquo and Duncan are Others who must be removed to

facilitate Macbeth's ambition. In both Macbeth and Victor, desire drives them to violate moral and natural laws and sets the stage for their self-destructive journeys (Greenblatt, 2004).

By combining these theoretical approaches, this paper explores desire not only as a personal shortcoming but as a deep psychological and philosophical state that systematically undermines the self's integrity. The self-destructive trajectory, the gradual loss of psychological integrity, moral direction, and social identity, becomes the connecting thread between the divergent goals of both characters and serves as the tragic fate of both (Winnicott, 1965; Levine, 1979).

Macbeth's Desire and his Self-destruction

Macbeth's ambition is political, focused on kingship. At the beginning of the play, he is a well-known general, loyal to King Duncan, and renowned for his military skills. However, when he meets the necromancers, who foretell his own sovereignty, his id, the original part of his soul that calls for instant satisfaction, takes over. As he becomes increasingly insecure about his manhood and social standing (Adelman, 1992), his wife's convincing speech erodes his sense of self, a buffer between desire and reality.

Macbeth's inner turmoil is revealed in his soliloquy in Act 1, Scene 7. He is aware that it is an unrighteous thing to kill Duncan, and he is afraid of the cosmic and social repercussions of killing Duncan. He briefly experiences his superego, his moral conscience. "But he has no spur / To prick the sides of his purpose but only / Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself / And falls on the other" (Shakespeare, 1623, p. 25). This is the turning point in Macbeth's life: he sees ambition as his only driving force, stronger than logic and moral restrictions. This is the turning point at which his id begins to take over his superego, and he begins his self-destruction.

Macbeth's mental state goes into a downward spiral after Duncan's death. He goes mad and orders more murders to secure his throne: Banquo, Fleance, and Macduff's family. A collapse in Macbeth's ability to distinguish psychological experience from external reality,

likely tied to his guilt. These visions can be understood as the Freudian return of the repressed, in which repressed guilt is expressed in distorted perceptual forms, and the ego cannot distinguish them from reality. The coherent self- soldier, husband, and subject starts to break apart at the seams as a result of its crimes.

Lady Macbeth is central to inciting and sustaining Macbeth's destructive desire. At first, she is an externalized id that calls him to do what he most wants, without remorse or hesitation. Her famous appeal to spirits in Act 1, Scene 5, in which she begs them to "unsex me here" and "fill me with cruelty," is a dramatic effort to destroy her own superego, to be pure and guiltless desire (p. 40). Psychoanalytically, she tries to remove all conscience and self-restraint totally. She becomes somnambulist and obsessive about hand-washing, which is the Freudian law that repression cannot go on. The guilt that she represses returns again, in the form of compulsions, which are a sign of the total breakdown of her psychological integrity. She suffers from a social and psychological self-destruction that leads to her loss of status, sanity, and ultimately her life.

By the end of the play, the play highlights Macbeth's isolation, helplessness, and lack of humanity. His famed soliloquy in Act 5, Scene 5, "Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player / That struts and frets his hour upon the stage / And then is heard no more" (Shakespeare, 1623, p. 62) is a deep acknowledgment that his pursuit has brought him nothing but emptiness. The self that found meaning in power has found that power, without human connection and moral foundation, yields only nihilism. The final stage of self-dissolution is awareness that the self is a "walking shadow" of meaning and substance. When Macbeth realizes nothing is enjoyable for him anymore, and death means nothing to him because he has "unwept and unwakeful" destroyed everything, his journey ends.

Desire and Self-Disintegration in Victor Frankenstein

Victor Frankenstein's desire is not political,

but intellectual and scientific. He seeks to discover the secret to life and gain a godlike power of creation; his curiosity is obsessive, pushing beyond normal human limits. Unlike Macbeth, Victor does not seek social or political power but mastery over nature. His id is an unquenchable thirst for learning, and his ego fails to account for the moral implications of his work (Mellor, 1988).

Victor's quest for knowledge in Chapter 4 of *Frankenstein* is disturbing: "I pursued nature to her hiding-places... A new species would bless me as its creator and source; many happy and excellent natures would owe their being to me" (Shelley, 1818, p. 54). This passage shows that Victor's project is motivated by his need for recognition and control. His superego, his conscience, his moral responsibility, and his moral obligation are conspicuous in the creative process. He does not consider the implications of creating a living being without love, care, or socialization. This drive is to fill a lack in himself, to find recognition and significance in a way he cannot find in ordinary human relationships.

However, when the Creature is brought to life, Victor is shocked and repelled. He releases his creation into the world and allows it to fend for itself in an unfriendly world. This desertion is the final moral sin that sets off a series of unfortunate events in the novel. Psychoanalytically, the Creature projects Victor's unacknowledged guilt and fear; it embodies everything Victor fears or feels guilty about in his desire. Victor's rejection of the Creature is a psychological move that only deepens his guilt and drives him toward self-destruction.

The effects of Victor's desire become apparent in the Creature's narration, which makes up the bulk of the novel. The Creature is not inherently evil; a series of rejections and ostracism made him that way. The revenge he shows for the abandonment of Victor's brother, William, the murder of his close friend, Clerval, and the murder of his wife, Elizabeth, is a direct reaction to the abandonment. This cycle of violence mirrors Victor's internal struggle between his id (the desire to create) and his

superego (the rules that govern him). As he keeps making scientific discoveries, the self he has built slowly disintegrates as each murder robs him of his family, friends, and society.

Victor's full psychological breakdown culminates in the Arctic, where he is to chase the Creature in a final and futile chase. Even here, his ambition has wrecked his life: "I have been myself blasted in these hopes, yet another may succeed" (Shelley, 1818, p. 219), but he is not entirely guilty of the ruin he has caused. Even if he has committed the worst sins, his self-pity reflects more on his own misery than on his misdeeds. This continuing self-centeredness implies that for Victor there is no real self-awareness or moral awakening in the process of self-dissolution. He ends up as he began: isolated, obsessed with his failure, and unable to understand its extent.

The novel's ending, with creator and creation caught in mutual destruction on the Arctic ice, is a powerful image of total self-destruction. They are both without any company, and their relationship is one of hate and dependency, which neither can break free from. Victor is now nothing more than the fruit of his ambition and its effects; the once promising student of Ingolstadt has been completely consumed by the ambition that once propelled him. The self is not just injured; it is totally dissolved, and the only remains of it are the shell of an obsession, which persists even after the person's death.

Comparative Analysis: Political Desire vs Scientific Desire

Both Macbeth and Victor Frankenstein are tragic characters driven to their downfall by unchecked desire. However, the nature and setting of their desires differ, resulting in distinct yet parallel modes of self-destruction. Macbeth's ambition is political and hierarchical; he desires the crown, a socially acceptable yet morally unacceptable ambition. His deeds bring political chaos and turmoil, as they do his internal turmoil. The self-disintegration that follows reflects the breakdown of social roles (thane, husband, subject) that formed his identity (Shakespeare, 1623).

Victor's wish, by contrast, is creative. His goal is to create something never done before: a living being. He wants to achieve something not only socially unacceptable but also outside the normal social framework. His actions disrupt the cycles of life and death, causing personal and familial devastation rather than widespread political devastation. Victor's self-disintegration is also private: from a kingdom he loses his family, and from his subjects, his friends, and his beloved.

Both characters have deficient superegos. Macbeth recognizes the wrongness of murder, but lets his id and Lady Macbeth take over his conscience. He visits the witches again, seeking comfort and security for the future, showing how the ego, once permeated by the witches, grows increasingly reliant on them. Victor's thirst for knowledge leaves him with no time to consider moral issues. They both suffer from a great deal of guilt, and this manifests in their hallucinations, nightmares, and eventual madness. However, the bond between the two and their creations is different. The throne Macbeth builds is built on murder and maintained with violence; it is a form of social organization which starts to rot the moment it is established. What Victor makes is a living thing, ignored and isolated. In both cases, the creation is the means of the creator's downfall. However, in Macbeth's case, the creation is an abstraction that wreaks personal and social destruction, whereas in Victor's case, the creation is a human being who wreaks personal destruction.

The specific forms of self-destruction portrayed also reflect the historical backgrounds of these two texts. Macbeth embodies Renaissance fears of divine order, fidelity, and the ramifications of regicide. The self sits within a cosmic and social hierarchy; violating it destroys the framework that makes the self meaningful. Frankenstein expresses Romantic fears of science, excessive individualism, and the limits of knowledge. The self is conceived as fundamentally relational; cutting off these relationalities in an obsessive individual quest destroys the self's foundation. In both, self-

destruction is not just personal tragedy but cultural commentary, and both express cultural fears about the limits of legitimate human aspiration.

The Study of Language, Oratory, and the Rhetoric of Desire

One aspect of the two texts that has not been explored is how language rationalizes, justifies, and hides desires toward others and oneself. Oratory and self-dishonesty in these characters support a psychoanalytic reading because language in both plays is not simply a tool for communication. Language is also a psychological armor. The soliloquies of Macbeth are outstanding instances of Macbeth's self-persuasion and self-examination. His ego strives to balance moral standards, but his words show how slowly he has lost that balance. In Act 2, Scene 1, Duncan's hallucinatory and rational thinking is deeply intertwined before his death, which is evident in his famous dagger soliloquy. Macbeth's address to the imagined dagger, "Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible / To feeling as to sight?" ([Shakespeare, 1623, pp. 36-37](#)), signals his instability. Macbeth's instability is shown in his talk with the dagger that is not real. It suggests that this is no longer an ego that can clearly tell the difference between inner and outer reality. The conditionals and introspection in his language perform the collapse of his superego.

In Act 3, Banquo is killed, and Macbeth's speech becomes less a question and more a determination to act. In Act 3, Scene 4, he says that he has "stepp'd in so far, that, should I wade no more, / Returning were as tedious as go o'er" ([Shakespeare, 1623, p.135](#)), meaning that he has plunged so far into the desire to become king that he cannot get out without committing more violence. The conditional structure undercuts its own evidence, playing the psychological trick his desire has set up. Language here reflects not only self-destruction. It also catalyzes it, with Macbeth using rhetoric to strengthen his decision to destroy himself.

The rhetorical self-accusation is also central to Victor Frankenstein's story voice. The novel is

presented as a first-person retrospective confession to Captain Walton, allowing Victor to dictate how his story is told. This narrative frame is psychological; the telling constructs the self. Victor is always a victim of his own fate, nature, and overly high intellectual ambitions, never an agent of his own actions. His recourse to providence outside his control, "Fate had decreed my utter and terrible destruction," is a rhetorical device that helps him evade total responsibility.

The narrative approach is useful from a psychoanalytic point of view because it shows rationalization as an ego defense mechanism that offers plausible-sounding explanations for actions driven by unconscious desires. Victor's downfall is not his desire to be god-like and control nature, but his desire for glory and control over nature, which he sees as noble aspirations tragically corrupted by external forces. From a Freudian perspective, this rhetorical self-deception reflects the ego's inability to face reality and confront the true nature of its own motivations (Freud, 1961).

Notably, the Creature's voice in Victor's story serves as a counterpoint that challenges and undermines Victor's self-serving arguments. The Creature is a well-spoken victim who learns to speak by watching the De Lacey family and makes strong demands for justice, all of which run counter to Victor's view of him as a monstrous, subhuman threat. In many ways the Creature's voice is more morally consistent than Victor's, and Shelley's novel includes a commentary on the rhetoric of ambitious self-justification right within its structure. This puts readers in a position to sense the disjunction between the self-presentation and the moral reality this narrative obscures, a disjunction that is the literary equivalent of the split between the speaking subject and the subject of the unconscious (Lacan, 1977).

As a woman in a culture that both celebrated and disparaged women's creativity, Mary Shelley can be read as probing the ethics of an ambition grounded in a lack of care, a lack of relationship, and a lack of responsibility, prerogatives of her

culture. The self-disintegration that Victor goes through is therefore not only personal; it is also culturally symptomatic; it is the inevitable end of a masculinity that has been defined by domination, mastery, and a lack of connection and caring.

Desire, Technology, and Political Power with Contemporary Relevance

One of the most compelling arguments for a comparative psychoanalytic study of Macbeth and Frankenstein in the twenty-first century is their central themes of human ambition in science, technology, and politics, which remain relevant today. Both are not just historical literary documents; they are also prophetic critiques that resonate with timeliness today.

Victor Frankenstein is the most common literary image for the perils of unrestrained scientific desire. In modern discussions of artificial intelligence, genetic engineering, and biotechnology, a pervasive fear is that scientific creation will become uncontrollable and turn destructively against its creator, known as the "Frankenstein complex" (Turney, 1998). Shelley raises moral questions: Who is responsible for creation? What responsibility does a creator have toward its creation? The moral questions scientists, policymakers, and technologists raise about autonomous weapon systems, large language models, and gene-editing technologies like CRISPR are the same ones being asked today. Victor's lack of ethical sensitivity in his creation, and his inability to take responsibility for its ramifications, is a cautionary tale for creators who value innovation over ethical oversight.

Macbeth's path also illustrates the psychology of political authoritarianism. His career, and the manner of his fall from grace, is echoed in the histories of many historical and modern leaders who have allowed the quest for power to taint and lead them to commit murder of their rivals, to eliminate threats from others, to quell dissent, and to retreat into paranoia and isolation. Political psychology research supports this psychoanalytic view, attributing their actions to deep-seated insecurity and a weak ego that seeks to balance unconscious inadequacy

through power accumulation. Macbeth's growing inability to trust anyone, his willingness to kill even his former allies, and his eventual nihilistic hopelessness are not just dramatic devices. They are psychologically realistic depictions of a certain type of political character. The study of Macbeth can thus serve not only literary purposes but also impart moral lessons to future leaders who need to understand that "good ambition" and "bad ambition" are distinctly different, and that bad ambition is a form of self-destruction.

Furthermore, both texts anticipate the challenge of seeing nature as a resource for human use, as current ecological thought identifies. Victor's "attack" on nature's secrets, his work in graveyards, his experiments on dismembered bodies, and his efforts to "unlock life itself" are all examples of what environmental philosophers call the instrumentalization of nature: subjecting nature to human ends. Macbeth's violation of the natural order, as evidenced by the unnatural things that happen after Duncan's death - such as the horses eating each other and the darkness at noon - is a reflection of the same idea that human political ambition, if it goes beyond its bounds, violates the natural order as well as the social order. The warnings against unbridled desire in both texts, then, open the way to interpretations that focus on ecological and environmental ethics rather than the individual and the political, extending beyond the human to the human world as a whole.

Isolation and Self-Disintegration

The most obvious resemblance between Macbeth and Frankenstein is the progressive isolation of each hero from others, as a direct consequence of their desire. It is not social isolation or physical isolation; it is psychological isolation, the loss of a coherent self, the collapse of a network of relationships and identities that connect human beings to the world. The protagonist's search for an absolute aim (supreme power or supreme knowledge) progressively alienates him from all human relations until he reaches a condition of radical

solitude that mirrors an inner wasteland brought about by his quest.

The first thing the reader notices about Macbeth is how much he belongs to a social world of relationships: a loyal soldier, a valued thane, a loving husband, a subject of a king he respects. He is defined by these relationships and the values they embody, such as courage, loyalty, and integrity. Every act of violence, each time he kills someone, cuts a thread of his public persona. His desire drives him to kill one person after another: Duncan, Banquo and Fleance, Macduff's family, and each killing cuts a thread of his public persona. In Act 5, Macbeth is almost completely isolated. His wife is mad and dying, his thanes have abandoned him, and even his thane Seyton gives little more than a tacit acceptance. The famous speech that begins, "I have lived long enough" ([Shakespeare, 1623, p. 22](#)) is a great document of alienation of self: Macbeth feels that he has lost honor, love, obedience, and troops of friends, and has been left with nothing but the empty shell of dominion. Psychoanalytically, this is the full absence of the relational self, the part of the self that exists only in relation to others, as object relations theorists describe. Macbeth has ruined the bonds that make him human and has thus killed himself before the actual death at the end of the play.

Victor Frankenstein goes through a similar process of self-destruction via isolation. He starts the book as a cherished son, a devoted friend, and a devoted fiancé. His father Alphonse, his friend Henry Clerval, and his eventual wife Elizabeth offer comfort, stability, and moral grounding. Nevertheless, as soon as he hides his quest to create something new and different, Victor withdraws from the world. He conducts his insatiable research in secret and in physical isolation. When he animates the Creature, he does not seek friends or family. He runs away in terror, adding to his original mistake of creating the creature his second mistake: leaving it behind. As he loses each of his own acts of unchecked desire (Justine, Clerval, Elizabeth, his father), he is further isolated, increasingly cut off

from others until he is left alone on the ice of the Arctic, in pursuit of a Creature who is both his last remaining human-like connection and the embodiment of his destruction (Shelley, 1818).

The final isolation of creator and creation, both completely isolated, is the novel's strongest statement: a symmetry of isolation neither can escape, a relationship of mutual destruction. Nevertheless, of the once-promising student of Ingolstadt, nothing remains but a dying man consumed by his desire and its effects, and no longer able to articulate its full nature. Isolation is also a theme common to both works. It may be compared with the Romantic philosophy of the solitary genius, a man of exceptional gifts set apart from, and above, ordinary humanity. This Romantic ideal recurs throughout Shelley's novel. Victor embodies all the traits of the Romantic hero: extraordinary intelligence, passionate devotion, and prophetic ambition, along with his lack of relationships and moral responsibility; the novel shows how these traits can become tools of disaster. This Romantic cult of the solitary genius is therefore condemned: greatness does not lie in isolation; greatness lies in madness and destruction.

The Renaissance was a philosophical era quite different from Shakespeare's, and he reaches the same conclusion in his own way. Macbeth's isolation is not due to heroic individualism; it stems from the breakdown of the Renaissance notion of order, the hierarchical structure that connects people, their sovereign, and God. Macbeth's attempt to escape that order leads him away from freedom and power; instead, he cuts himself off from the same order that enabled him to become who he is. In either case, the self disintegrates when it separates from the social and moral frameworks that make it up.

Contribution of the Study

The study's principal contribution is bringing Macbeth's political ambition and Victor Frankenstein's scientific ambition into one sustained psychoanalytic framework. The distinction between political and scientific desire is potentially productive, especially where both

International "Journal of Academic Research for Humanities (JARH) 6(4)" ultimately produce isolation and a loss of relational identity. The discussion of rhetoric and self-justification is another promising contribution because it connects psychological desire with narrative and dramatic language. The contemporary section also opens useful possibilities for thinking about scientific responsibility, AI, technological control, and political power.

Conclusion

This paper has shown how Macbeth's and Victor Frankenstein's uncontrolled desires lead to their tragic self-destruction. The role of guilt and repression, and the effects of their behaviors, have been explored. Both characters are archetypes of the tragic creator: people who want to create something that ultimately brings them down. Macbeth starts a period of bloodshed that separates him from society and from himself; Victor brings a living being into existence, which becomes the cause of his grief and his disintegration.

Their stories are about desire: desire without morality and responsibility becomes a force of self-destruction. The self-destructive dissolution process is inevitable, progressive, irreversible, and complete, stemming from the initial transgression, as the psyche cannot integrate its crimes and collapses under the burden of its transgressions. The theme remains timeless and relevant today, whether in political influence, scientific discovery, or technological superiority. Future research may extend it to other literary works or to figures in current literature, politics, science, or industry. The sad cycle of desire, creation, and self-destruction runs through history and culture, reminding us that the self cannot sustain itself when detached from the ethical and relational structures that make it up.

Comparing these two works shows that self-destruction is not an individual tragedy; it is a cultural symptom. The self that aspires to total control over the world it inhabits finds itself, in the process, in a situation where it must pay a price for this control: the price of self. The self that desires total control of its world, whether from political ambition or scientific hubris, finds

itself, in the process, in a position where the price of this control is the loss of self. The walking shadow and the Arctic ice, the last images of Macbeth and Victor, are not just individual deaths; they are a loss of sense, a civilizing of the human, the self-destruction of desire. In this context, both works illuminate the darkest possibilities of the human psyche and warn against the desire that would demolish all, including the self that desires.

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